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**A Psychoanalytic Criticism of War and Humanitarian Elements in “1984” by George Orwell and “A Thousand Splendid Suns” by Khalid Hosseini.**

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**Introduction**

The idea that war is a pervasive and transformative force that offers a lens through which to view the human condition has been extensively addressed in literature. This study employs a psychoanalytic method to investigate the relationship between psychological factors and the consequences of war in two significant literary works: Khaled Hosseini's "*A Thousand Splendid Suns*" and George Orwell's "*1984*".

War as a common perception, a war is a conflict between political parties that lasts a considerable amount of time and is quite intense. Additional prerequisites are required while applying social science. These types of disagreements are usually referred to by sociologists only if they are initiated and conducted in accordance with recognized social standards.

They see war as an institution that is approved by the law or tradition. Military writers usually restrict the phrase to battles in which both sides have sufficient power to delay the combat's conclusion. Armed conflicts are usually referred to as pacifications, military expeditions, or explorations when they occur between larger states; they are called interventions or retaliations when they occur between smaller states; and they are dubbed insurrections or rebellions when they occur inside groupings. If the opposition is strong or persistent enough, such episodes can escalate to a point where the term "war" is justified.

An analysis of "1984" demonstrates how totalitarian governments use war as a tool of control to stifle human agency and shape public opinions. The novel's protagonists examine the psychological impacts of ongoing combat, highlighting the loss of individual identity and the widespread consequences of living in a society that is constantly at war. On the other hand, "A Thousand Splendid Suns" transports readers to the terrifying terrain of Afghanistan during hostilities. This study utilises a psychoanalytic perspective to examine the psychological trauma that characters undergo, highlighting instances of fortitude and empathy amidst the humanitarian difficulties caused by war.

To better understand how the ongoing state of war in Orwell's dystopian world is used as a tool for social control and how the Afghan conflict in Hosseini's story affects people's identities and experiences, this study will employ the framework of psychoanalytic criticism to examine the subconscious levels of characters. The inquiry also explores the humanitarian aspects, comparing and contrasting Hosseini's depiction of human connection and moments of resiliency under the trials of war with Orwell's harsh society's lack of empathy and compassion.

### **Literature Review**

George Orwell's 1984 and Khaled Hosseini's "A Thousand Splendid Suns" offer a psychoanalytic critique of war and humanitarian aspects, offering important insights into the psychology of those living under repressive governments and in times of conflict. In "1984," George Orwell examines how totalitarian rule affects people, especially via Winston's experience with repression and internal strife. Winston's disobedience to the Party can be interpreted under a Freudian lens as an expression of his id, at odds with the superego that the Party's doctrine represents. In the same vein, Hosseini illustrates the effects of oppression and war on figures like Mariam and Laila in "A Thousand Splendid Suns," whose stories echo Freudian ideas like repression and fortitude. Analysis of the women's bond as a type of sublimation, one way to understand the women's bond is as a type of sublimation that reroutes their needs for autonomy and freedom into a bond of support. Both books give moving insights into the nuances of human nature during times of conflict, highlighting the human spirit's tenacity in the face of dehumanization.

### **Psychoanalytic Criticism**

Psychoanalytic Criticism calls for the understanding of the unconscious, the repressed mind, to understand the human life experience, culture, language, and society because, to critics, can only be analysed as if it were a dream. This idea contends that because literature and dreams are similar, the language in text represents the author's unconscious wants, fears, worries, and traumas; as a result, the author manages his or her psychosis through the text. The foundational ideas of psychoanalytic critique, which surfaced in the 1960s as the most significant interpretive theory among the waves of the post-World War II era, are the functioning of the mind, instincts, and sexuality.

Critics contend that knowing the unconscious and the repressed mind is essential to understanding human life experience, culture, language, and society since the book can only be assessed as if it were a dream. This theory argues that because dreams and literature share similarities, the language used in a text represents the author's unconscious desires, anxieties, fears, and traumas; as a result, the author uses the text to control their psychosis.

## **Literature and Psychoanalytic Criticism**

Psychoanalysis is a field of study in psychiatry and medicine and a means of understanding literature, philosophy, culture, and religion. Sigmund Freud often connected his theory of psychoanalysis with literature and art in general.

In "*The Interpretation of Dreams*," Freud examined how the audience responded to the play and the Oedipal themes in *Hamlet* by Shakespeare and *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles. Freud further explored the connection between psychoanalysis and literature in his book "Creative writers and daydreaming." To explain creativity, he compared it to plays, dreams, fantasy, and artistic endeavors. In "Creative Writers and Daydreaming," Freud conducted a psychoanalytic study into the nature of literature and first offered his idea of how a literary work is composed. A work of literature is like a fantasy, according to Freud. Like fantasy, literary works elevate an unsatisfactory reality by capturing an unmet need in their fiction. Psychologists who examined the framework discovered that.

Psychoanalytic literary criticism can focus on one or more of the following:

1. The author: The theory is applied to analyze the author, the literary work, and the author's biography.
2. Characters: This theory is used to analyze one or more of the characters; the psychological theory explains the characters' goals and behaviors.
3. The audience: The idea explains why readers find the work appealing.
4. The theory: It is used to examine the use of language and symbolism in the work

Psychoanalysis impacts writers, and this can be seen in the characters they create and their own thoughts. Psychoanalytic concepts propounded by Sigmund Freud influenced the psychoanalysis of authors:

1. The primacy of the Unconscious.
2. The Iceberg theory of the psyche.
3. Dreams are an expression of our consciousness.

### **Analyzing Theory of Freud**

Several Sigmund Freud psychoanalytic theories can be used to analyze the characters in Khaled Hosseini's "*A Thousand Splendid Suns*" and George Orwell's "*1984*", especially when it comes to the themes of war and humanitarianism. Let's examine a few of these notions and how the characters in the two novels represent them:

Freud's structural model of personality includes the id (instinctual drives), ego (conscious decision-making), and superego (internalized moral standards). In both novels, characters grapple with the conflict between their instinctual desires (id), societal pressures (superego), and attempts at self-preservation (ego).

In "*1984*": Winston Smith's desire for individuality and freedom (id) conflicts with the Party's indoctrination and surveillance (superego), leading to internal turmoil and rebellion. And,

Mariam's suppressed desires for autonomy and love (id) clash with societal expectations and gender roles (superego), contributing to her sense of isolation and despair.

Freud proposed defense mechanisms as unconscious strategies used by individuals to cope with anxiety and protect the ego from distress. In the dystopian societies depicted in both novels, characters employ various defense mechanisms to navigate the oppressive environments they inhabit. Winston engages in repression by suppressing his rebellious thoughts and desires, attempting to conform to the Party's ideology to avoid punishment. In "A Thousand Splendid Suns": Laila uses denial as a defense mechanism to cope with the trauma of losing her family, initially refusing to acknowledge the reality of their deaths.

Repression is the process of forcing undesired or upsetting ideas and feelings into the subconscious, whereas sublimation is the process of channeling the same impulses into contexts that are acceptable to society. Both novels' characters live under repressive regimes where they are forced to suppress who they really are, which causes them to struggle within and suffer psychologically. Winston suppresses his need for independence and rebellion, maintaining subversive feelings and thoughts although publicly adhering to the party's rules. And as a result, he starts to doubt what freedom and reality really are. From "A Thousand Splendid Suns": Mariam sublimates her need for love and independence by focusing her energies on taking care of Laila and her family. Serving others gives her purpose and comfort, and in the end, she discovers her own strength and resiliency.

According to Freud's theory of psychosexual development, people go through stages (oral, anal, phallic, latency, and genital) that are marked by conflicts and solutions involving aggressive and sexual urges. In both books, the characters struggle with the fallout from unsolved issues from their past. Their relationships and behaviors are impacted by these unresolved conflicts, which affect their psychological health. The protagonists overcome these obstacles via reflection and self-discovery to evolve and find closure.

Winston's failed relationships and suppressed sexual urges in 1984 are reflections of unresolved issues from his past, which add to his sense of isolation and alienation. Example from "A Thousand Splendid Suns": Mariam's painful early life experiences—such as her father's rejection of her and the death of her mother—have an impact on how she views herself and how she interacts with others as an adult, which shows up as feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt.

These ideas shed light on the inner conflicts, drives, and actions of the characters while also highlighting the significant psychological effects of oppressive environments.

### **Comparative Analysis**

While the novels have a stark representation of the backgrounds of war and cruelty with humanity, some themes coincide with the psychoanalytic aspects given by Freud. This section analyses the analyzing the themes and observing the characters' behaviors, motivations, and interactions, particularly concerning the themes of war and humanity.

### **Common Themes**

**Repression and Control:** In both novels, characters experience forms of repression and control, whether from external forces or internal conflicts. In "1984," the Party exerts complete control

over its citizens, monitoring their thoughts and actions. This is exemplified in Winston's constant fear of being caught and his struggle to conform to the Party's ideology. Similarly, in "A Thousand Splendid Suns," characters like Mariam and Laila face repression from the Taliban, which imposes strict rules and limitations on their lives, leading to internal conflicts as they navigate their desires and societal expectations.

**Escape and Fantasy:** Characters in both novels use fantasy and escapism as coping mechanisms to deal with their harsh realities. In "1984," Winston escapes into fantasies of rebellion and a better life, particularly through his relationship with Julia. Similarly, in "A Thousand Splendid Suns," Laila dreams of a future with Tariq and reminisces about her life before the war, using these fantasies to cope with the hardships she faces under the Taliban's rule.

**Trauma and Resilience:** Both novels explore themes of trauma and resilience in the face of war and oppression. In "1984," Winston experiences trauma through torture and betrayal, yet maintains a sense of defiance and resilience in his pursuit of truth and freedom. In "A Thousand Splendid Suns," Mariam and Laila endure loss, abuse, and hardship, yet find strength in their bond and their determination to survive, highlighting their resilience in the face of adversity.

### **Differences in Portrayal**

**Nature of Oppression:** Although repressive cultures are shown in both works, the type of tyranny varies. In "1984," the Party has ultimate control over all facets of life, and tyranny is overt and dictatorial. On the other hand, "A Thousand Splendid Suns" depicts a more complex kind of Taliban-era oppression, with rigid gender norms, limitations on personal freedom, and acts of violence influencing the lives of the protagonists.

**Character Relationships:** In "1984", relationships are marked by deceit and manipulation, which represents a society where fear reigns supreme and there is a lack of genuine connection and trust. On the other hand, relationships are shown in "A Thousand Splendid Suns" as sources of resilience and strength. This is especially true of the link between Mariam and Laila, which provides consolation and support when faced with hardship.

**Resolution and Hope:** The resolution and hope that are portrayed in the two novels' ends also vary. The novel "1984" closes on a depressing note, with Winston finally giving in to the Party's influence and abandoning his principles. As a result of Mariam giving her life to save Laila and guarantee her children's better future, "A Thousand Splendid Suns" concludes on a note that is more optimistic and suggests that there is hope even in the midst of tragedy.

Although "1984" and "A Thousand Splendid Suns" both examine psychoanalytic concepts like resilience, control, and repression, they do so in strikingly different ways that reflect the individual themes and narratives of each book through dialogue and details drawn from the backdrop of portraying humanitarianism and war.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, a comparison of Khaled Hosseini's "A Thousand Splendid Suns" and George Orwell's "1984" offers fascinating insights into how psychoanalytic elements are portrayed, especially regarding the themes of humanity and war. Characters battling trauma, control, and

repression are shown in both books, although the characters' resistance and levels of oppression are different. In "1984," the repressive rule of the Party created a depressing atmosphere where even ideas are watched upon and managed. Winston and Julia are two examples of characters that find comfort in one another, yet their revolt is finally put down, showing how pointless resistance is in such a society.

However, "A Thousand Splendid Suns" depicts a more complex kind of Taliban-era oppression, when individuals like Mariam and Laila show incredible fortitude in the face of hardship. Their relationship acts as a source of support, demonstrating the strength of human connection and unity even in the most trying circumstances. Notwithstanding these variations, the human spirit's enduring ability to fight against dehumanization and pursue freedom and dignity is highlighted in both books. Orwell and Hosseini encourage readers to consider the complexity of human nature and the shared yearning for autonomy, truth, and connection through their examination of psychoanalytic components.

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